



CONGRESSMAN HENRY A. WAXMAN NEWS

1721 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
8425 WEST 3rd STREET

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90048

202-225-3976
213-651-1040

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Howard Flinson
(213) 651-1040

March 10, 1981

WAXMAN CONDEMNS REAGAN SALE OF F-15 GEAR TO SAUDI ARABIA

Congressman Henry A. Waxman, one of Israel's staunchest Congressional supporters, has attacked the Reagan Administration's agreement to sell Saudi Arabia gear for F-15 planes as "a betrayal of Congress and a betrayal of Israel."

Waxman insisted that the sale cannot be justified as necessary for Saudi Arabia's self-defense.

"Military experts agree that the F-15 gear accomplishes no defensive purposes, but sharply enhances Saudi offensive capability. Certainly, the sale of extra fuel tanks gives the planes greater range and makes them a direct threat to Israel."

The Congressman said he could see no justification for the reversal of an explicit promise made by Secretary of Defense Harold Brown to Congress on May 9, 1978, that this type of equipment would not be supplied to the Saudis. Waxman said he doubted Congress would have approved the original sale of F-15 planes to Saudi Arabia had it been able to anticipate President Reagan's sharp shift in policy.

"I take issue with the Administration's entire approach to the Middle East. Instead of focusing on the threat to Israel's security and the need to defuse Arab-Israeli hostilities, the Reagan Administration is concentrating on winning favor with the Saudis. The Administration is acting on the assumption that direct Soviet military action in the Middle East is a greater threat than renewed Arab-Israeli hostilities. This unfounded assumption endangers our own security and the security and survival of Israel," Waxman concluded.

###